

VZCZCXYZ0006
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTVA #0599 0571017
ZNR UUUUU ZZH ZUI RUEWMCE6608 0571047
R 261017Z FEB 07
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 000599

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

PLEASE PASS TO NEA/IPA AND G/TIP.

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [GTIP](#) [PHUM](#) [IS](#) [KCRM](#) [KJUS](#)

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL ANNOUNCES NATIONAL PLAN TO
COMBAT SLAVERY AND LABOR TRAFFICKING

1. (U) THE GOI HAS DRAFTED A NATIONAL PLAN TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR THE PURPOSES OF SLAVERY AND FORCED LABOR, FOCUSING ON PROSECUTION, PREVENTION AND PROTECTION. THE PLAN IS DESIGNED TO HELP MIGRANT WORKERS, WHO OFTEN PAY LARGE FEES TO AGENCIES THAT ARRANGE THEIR JOBS IN ISRAEL AND ARE THUS VULNERABLE TO EXPLOITATION -- INCLUDING COERCED SEXUAL SERVICES -- UNTIL THOSE FEES CAN BE RECOUPED. THE PLAN WAS A JOINT EFFORT OF THE DIRECTORS-GENERAL OF THE MINISTRIES OF JUSTICE, PUBLIC SECURITY, INTERIOR, INDUSTRY, TRADE AND LABOR, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HEALTH AND WELFARE, AS WELL AS THE PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE AND THE POLICE COMMISSIONER.

2. (U) IN A MEETING ON JANUARY 10, 2007, THE COMMITTEE OF DIRECTORS GENERAL REGARDING THE BATTLE AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS DECIDED ON A NATIONAL PLAN TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING FOR SLAVERY AND FORCED LABOR. THE DECISION WAS BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF A SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRED BY RACHEL GERSHUNI, APPOINTED LAST YEAR AS INTERMINISTERIAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING COORDINATOR. THE GOI DESCRIBED THE PLAN AS A "NECESSARY FIRST STEP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY TO SUPPRESS THIS SCOURGE." THE COORDINATOR'S OFFICE HAS A STATED "MESSIANIC VISION" TO "END TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND THUS MAKE OUR OFFICE UNNECESSARY", AN "OVERRIDING GOAL" TO "MAKE SURE THAT ISRAEL MEETS INTERNATIONAL CRITERIA IN REGARD TO THE BATTLE AGAINST TRAFFICKING, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS", AND A "WORKING METHOD" TO "BRING ABOUT COOPERATION AMONG BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS WHO WORK IN THE FIELD."

3. (U) THE COMMITTEE STATED FIVE PRIORITIES DURING THE FIRST STAGE: DIVIDING THE WORK BETWEEN ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INDICTMENTS AGAINST EMPLOYERS WHO USE SLAVERY OR COERCION; DEVELOPING CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING VICTIMS OF SLAVERY; LAUNCHING AN INFORMATION CAMPAIGN IN THE WORKERS' COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN TO INFORM THEM OF THEIR RIGHTS; HELPING VICTIMS REPATRIATE TO THEIR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN; AND FORMULATING A PACKAGE OF SERVICES FOR VICTIMS, INCLUDING SAFE HOUSES AND HEALTH CARE. THE LACK OF FACILITIES FOR LABOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS HAS BEEN A PARTICULAR SORE POINT WITH NGOS IN ISRAEL. FIVE TEAMS HAVE BEEN TASKED WITH DESIGNING WITHIN THE NEXT THREE OR FOUR MONTHS OPERATIVE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THESE OBJECTIVES. THE SUBCOMMITTEE THAT SUBMITTED THE RECOMMENDATIONS WAS APPOINTED AS A PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE THAT WILL MEET PERIODICALLY TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS.

4. (U) THE COMMITTEE RECOGNIZED THAT ITS RECOMMENDATIONS MAY REQUIRE CHANGES IN EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN WORKERS THAT "CREATE A CLIMATE FRIENDLY TO THE DEVELOPMENT" OF TRAFFICKING. THE COMMITTEE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT ITS RECOMMENDATIONS CONSTITUTE A NATIONAL PLAN, NOT OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES THAT "WILL NEED TO BE DESIGNED IN THE WAKE OF THE PLAN." OTHER COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF A POLICY THAT WILL NOT ALLOW THE ENTRY OF FOREIGN WORKERS FROM COUNTRIES THAT HAVE NO DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION IN ISRAEL, CLEAR PROCEDURES REGARDING THE

TRANSFER OF INFORMATION AMONG LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES,
ENFORCING EXISTING LAWS PROHIBITING MIDDLEMAN FEES, PLACEMENT
OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN DETENTION FACILITIES, LEGAL AID TO
VICTIMS OF SLAVERY AND LABOR TRAFFICKING, AND HEIGHTENED
SUPERVISION OF THE EGYPTIAN BORDER. INDUSTRY, TRADE AND
LABOR MINISTRY INSPECTORS, IMMIGRATION OFFICERS AND POLICE
ARE ALREADY UNDERGOING TRAINING TO HELP THEM RECOGNIZE
TRAFFICKING.

VISIT EMBASSY TEL AVIV'S CLASSIFIED WEBSITE:
[HTTP://WWW.STATE.SGOV.GOV/P/NEA/TELAVIV](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv)

YOU CAN ALSO ACCESS THIS SITE THROUGH THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S
CLASSIFIED SIPRNET WEBSITE.

JONES